

High Tunnel System

Georgia
Conservation Practice Job Sheet – 325 (10/15)

Producer _____ County _____ Date _____

Farm # _____ Tract # _____ Assisted By _____



Photo Credit, Carmen Westerfield, Georgia NRCS

Definition

An enclosed polyethylene, polycarbonate, plastic, or fabric covered structure that is used to cover and protect crops from sun, wind, excessive rainfall, or cold, to extend the growing season in an environmentally safe manner.

Purpose Improve plant health and vigor

Conditions where the practice applies This practice applies to land capable of producing crops. This practice applies where sun or wind intensity may damage crops, or where an extension of the growing season is needed due to climatic conditions.

Conservation management system

Normally, a single conservation practice does not successfully address a resource concern. Implement a conservation management system, a combination of conservation practices that achieves the desired effect on our soil, water, air, energy, plant and animal resources.

Lifespan and other requirements The high tunnel cover and the practice lifespans are 4 and 5 years, respectively. Install and maintain the high tunnel according to the manufacturer's recommendations.

For More Information

Contact your local NRCS Office and Soil and Water Conservation District

Plans and Specifications

Prepare plans and specifications in accordance with the criteria of this standard.

As a minimum, the plans and specifications include the following:

- Identify purpose.
- Document the planned growing season.
- Layout and location of the high tunnel.
- Site preparations and the required supporting practices for erosion control, runoff, and vegetative cover according to the requirements of the corresponding conservation practice standard.
- The planned width and length of the seasonal high tunnel. Statement that the seasonal high tunnel will be built per the manufacturer's directions.
- Procedure and timing to remove or roll up the high tunnel cover prior to inclement weather conditions.
- Procedure and timing to add or replace shade cloth for protection from the sun for the high tunnel cover.

Operation and Management

Managing a tunnel requires intensive and vigilant attention by the producer.

Prepare an operation and maintenance (O&M) plan and review with the landowner and/or operator responsible for the practice. Provide specific instruction for proper operation and maintenance of each component of this practice and detail the level of repairs needed to maintain the effectiveness and useful life of the practice.

Periodically inspect the high tunnel and repair, reinstall, or replace, as needed to accomplish the intended purpose.

Manage the structure in a manner that limits wind and/or snow damage. Close sides and ends before storm events. In areas that receive snow and ice, the structure should be closed prior to winter weather.

Remove snow and ice from the structure cover and sides promptly to prevent structure failure.

When the structure is at serious risk of collapse due to weather conditions, consider slashing the plastic cover to relieve pressure and save the framework.

Perform soil tests regularly to monitor nutrients and to monitor salt build-up. The soils under the immobile high tunnels may require periodic "flushing" to remove salt build-up. This is accomplished by removing the cover for a season to allow natural precipitation to infiltrate, or by artificially flooding the ground under cover.

If needed, seed all disturbed earth surfaces outside of the high tunnel and maintain the vegetation throughout the structure's life.

Removal of cover materials shall be consistent with the intended purpose and site conditions.

Plan for proper disposal of the cover at the end of its useful life.

Operation of equipment near and on the site shall not compromise the intended purpose of the high tunnel structure or its cover.

Date	Notes on Plans & Specifications and Operation & Management

Jobsheet Certifications

Prepared by

_____ Title _____ Date _____

Approved by

_____ Title _____ Date _____

Installation Meets Requirements of the NRCS Standard and Recommendations of the Manufacturer

Certified by

_____ Title _____ Date _____